



## Summer 2025

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### MISSION STATEMENT:

To serve, educate and inspire people through student, family and financial wellness services in partnership with our communities.

### GET INVOLVED:

If you would like to know more about how to donate and/or volunteer, please contact us at:

(305) 442-8306

[info@branchesfl.org](mailto:info@branchesfl.org)

Follow us @branchesfl



Thank You Luncheon for VITA volunteers!



Branches' Micro-Business participants receiving laptops at the Empower Your Business: A SCORE and Visa Small Business Resource Summit.

## A Message from the CEO

### BankOn Miami - Partnering with Purpose!

At Branches we have made it part of our overall mission to initiate, support and lead partnership opportunities across our community.

As a result of many years of developing key partnerships that make an impact, Branches is the proud leader of community-wide coalitions such as Miami Tax Pros (free tax prep) and now BankOn Miami!

One year ago, we assumed leadership of BankOn Miami in order to relaunch the coalition. Together with more than two dozen financial institutions and non-profits we are promoting access to safe, affordable bank and credit union accounts. These certified accounts connect people to the financial mainstream creating opportunities for financial security.

I had the privilege of attending the recent biennial Bank On National Conference in Washington D.C. hosted by the CFE Fund ([cfefund.org](http://cfefund.org)). It is amazing to see the progress that has been made in just 10 years of work in this area. There are more than 100 coalitions across the nation and millions of new accounts are opened each year.

Bank On certified accounts are an important component in creating pathways to financial freedom. We look forward to expanding our coalition throughout South Florida with new partnerships in both the government and non-profit sectors.

Thank YOU for supporting Branches as we work to fulfill our vision that all families thrive and achieve financial wellness!

With Hope & Gratitude,

**Brent McLaughlin**  
President & CEO



Branches' President & CEO at the 2025 Bank On National Conference in Washington D.C.



BankOn Miami Planning Meeting and Lunch.

# Black Tie & Blue Jeans Gala and Online Auction

More than 600 guests and sponsors raised a record breaking \$862,000 to help hardworking Miami families break the cycle of poverty.



Branches' President & CEO Brent McLaughlin, Dr. Kimberly Green, Gala Chairs Leah & Phillip Sylvester, Philanthropic Chairs Trish & Dan Bell



Presenting Sponsors George & Angeliki Marakas



Nyaya Toussaint, Gepsie Metellus, Jairo Ontiveros, Honoree Dr. Kimberly Green, Kathie Klarreich, and Carl-Phillipe Juste

Branches, the Miami-based nonprofit committed to providing educational and financial wellness programs to children and families across Miami-Dade County, hosted its highly anticipated 2025 Black Tie & Blue Jeans Gala and Auction on Saturday, April 26th at the JW Marriott Marquis Miami. Guests were transported into a whimsical world of pure imagination, complete with magical décor, flowing chocolate fountains, chocolate martinis served by Oompa Loompas, and, of course, Golden Tickets!

This year's Gala was led by Philanthropic Chairs, Trish and Dan Bell, and Gala Chairs, Leah and Phillip Sylvester. Trish and Dan Bell also generously provided a dollar-for-dollar matching grant for all gifts made during the evening's appeal, doubling the impact of every donation. A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the 2025 Trish & Dan Bell Community Empowerment Award to Dr. Kimberly Green of the Green Family Foundation, honoring her outstanding contributions to the South Florida community and beyond.

The Gala supported critical services that Branches provides to over 10,000 individuals. These programs include daily after-school enrichment, tutoring, college and career preparation for more than 550 students, along with financial coaching, micro-business support, free tax preparation, and emergency assistance for thousands of adults. More than 600 guests attended the sold-out event, including local philanthropists, business leaders, and community partners raising a record-breaking \$862,000 to fuel Branches' mission.



Branches 2025 Black Tie & Blue Jeans Gala Committee



Board Member Jonathan & Sarah Barrios



Dan & Trish Bell with Maribel & Superintendent of Miami-Dade County Public Schools Dr. Jose L. Dotres



Scott & Karla Richey



Board Member Scott & Kathy Howard

## Top Sponsors of Branches' Black Tie & Blue Jeans Gala and Auction included:

### **Premier Sponsor**

Trish & Dan Bell

### **Presenting Sponsor**

Angeliki & George Marakas

### **Shining Star Sponsor**

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### **Diamond Sponsors**

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### **Platinum Sponsors**

Aetna Better Health of Florida

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**THANK YOU to all our generous sponsors for their incredible support!**



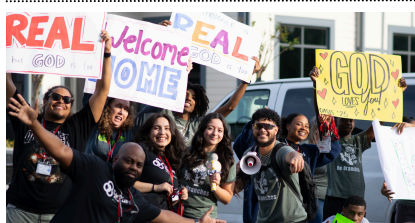
Scan the QR code to watch our Gala Recap video!

Please visit [branchesfl.org/2025gala](https://branchesfl.org/2025gala) to learn more.



# Branches Happenings

## Oasis Spring Break Camp & A Look Into a Micro-Business Success Story!



### Oasis Spring Break Camp: “The struggle is real—but God is too.” – Psalm 13

This spring, nearly 400 middle school and high school students and staff from Branches gathered at Warren W. Willis United Methodist Camp in Leesburg, FL for our annual Oasis Spring Break Camp—and it was truly one for the books.

Throughout the week, our students had the chance to step away from everyday distractions and reconnect with themselves, their peers, and God. From ziplining and canoeing to tag football and fishing, there was no shortage of outdoor adventure under the Florida sun. But more than just fun and games, this was a time for spiritual growth, reflection, and community.

Each day was filled with powerful moments of worship, small group discussions, and quiet time in the Word. Our incredible team of teachers poured into the students, sharing God’s love and reminding them of His presence in every season of life. One student shared “Oasis is the best part of my year! I love being able to get away, have fun, and feel really close to God. Everything about it is amazing—the people, the moments, the worship. I’m already counting down the days until next year!”

This unforgettable experience would not have been possible without the generous support of Trish and Dan Bell. Thank you for helping make Oasis Spring Break Camp a place of joy, transformation, and faith for so many.

### Meet a Branches Small Business: Patricia Bryant, the “Barrier Breaker”

Branches’ Micro-Business & BE ONE Program currently serves over 260 small businesses, and Patricia Bryant is one of them. Known to many as the “Barrier Breaker”, Patricia is on a mission to help others push past obstacles and step into their full potential. As the founder of Breaking Down Barriers A.S.A.P., LLC, Patricia has built a thriving life coaching and consulting business focused on transformation. Whether she’s working with individuals, families, or organizations, her goal remains the same: to empower people to discover their strengths, define their purpose, and move forward with confidence.

When Patricia joined the Branches’ Micro-Business Program, she came with a clear vision and a heart to serve. With support from the program, she deepened her coaching expertise, strengthened the foundation of her business, and gained tools to expand her reach and impact.

“Branches has poured into my purpose so much that the overflow has resulted in Breaking Down Barriers A.S.A.P. becoming more than a coaching service—it has become a leadership movement transforming lives by shifting mindsets, building resilience, and equipping people to lead boldly,” Patricia shared. Her success is a powerful example of what happens when passion meets purpose—and when local entrepreneurs receive the support they need to thrive. We are proud to celebrate her journey and the lives she continues to transform. For more information about Branches’ Micro-Business program, please email [sumlar@branchesfl.org](mailto:sumlar@branchesfl.org)



## THANK YOU to all our generous donors for supporting Branches’ programs!

All other donors from the current Fiscal Year (1/18/25 - 6/20/25) are listed at [branchesfl.org/our-stories](https://branchesfl.org/our-stories) under Newsletters

Trish & Dan Bell • Angeliki & George Marakas • Himan Brown Charitable Trust • Internal Revenue Service • Miami-Dade County PHCD • The Batchelor Foundation, Inc. • The Children's Trust • The Templeton Family Foundation • United Way Miami • Volunteer Florida • Anonymous • Capital One Services, LLC • Leah & Phillip Sylvester • Miami-Dade County - OMB Grants Coordination • Molina Healthcare of Florida, Inc. • Ocean Reef Community Foundation • The Miami Foundation

# Thank You, Branches Donors & Stakeholders!

List includes contributions received by Branches from January 18, 2025 to June 20, 2025. If you sent a contribution during this period and do not see your name on the list, please contact us at (305) 442-8306 x1005.

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**The Children's Trust**

**The Templeton Family Foundation**

**United Way Miami**

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## **Between \$30,000 and \$99,999**

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Miami-Dade County - OMB Grants

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All In Xpress

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First Bank

First UMC Coral Gables & The Growing

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## Gifts in Honor of

- Kimberly Green from Debra Albo-Steiger
- Kimberly Green from Jairo Ontiveros
- Kimberly Green from Kathie Klarreich
- Audrey Warren from Pastor Kipp
- Estrella from Matt Shepherd
- Ray Gonzalez from Carol Oberholtzer

# THANK YOU!



**Branches kicked off the summer with our Summer Shade Camp Ceremonies! This year the theme is Safari and our students are excited for a summer filled with fun learning!**

**Follow us on social media for more Summer Shade Camp fun updates - @branchesfl**





# Branches

Trish & Dan Bell Family  
Empowerment Centers

11500 NW 12th Ave, Miami, FL 33168 | [branchesfl.org](http://branchesfl.org)

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## Wednesday, August 6th, 2025

University of Miami Newman Alumni Center

6200 San Amaro Dr, Coral Gables, FL 33146

6PM - 8PM

Mix and mingle while building backpacks  
with supplies for a Branches student!  
Join us as we honor BB Americas with the  
2025 Herbert C. Parlato Volunteer Award



Scan to get your tickets!

Cost: \$50 Donation / \$60 at the door